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That SAN DIEGAN train connecting with the SAN JOAQUIN, leaving Los Angeles at 5:30p in my "LOS ANGELES CONNECTION" advertisement last issue, would arrive San Diego at 8:05p; the trains would pass at Serra at 6:56p. --Swan.

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rail travel newsletter

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FIRST ISSUE OF
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VOL. 4 NO. 1
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ON THE COVER:

Re-routed because of a derailment at Newark, California, the COAST STARLIGHT snaked past the former SP station at Niles, California, on a detour that took it from Elmhurst (East Oakland) to San Jose over freight-only trackage the morning of January 5. View is toward rear of train; nearest car to camera is Amtrak recreation car. Photo by Ted Nelson.

LETTERS

(The following was received from an Amtrak employee whom we will not identify.)

While the American passenger is rediscovering the railroad, Amtrak is failing to rediscover the American passenger... Amtrak passengers are suffering from sacrifice, a first-time train trip instead of the auto... Next vacation we'll take the train and enjoy our trip. But they'll run into no-heating, or too much heat from air-conditioning failure! A trip that could involve pure hell. What is Amtrak doing about its trains always coming in late or the derailments that have recently occurred? So far, nothing. What will happen when a number of passengers are seriously injured or die as a result of nobody caring? Southern Pacific is probably racking up a score card by now. This one company has done more damage to Amtrak than any other road operating Amtrak trains. Unless someone gets in gear, Amtrak will honor the same image Southern Pacific did before the Amtrak takeover. No doubt about it; Southern Pacific has found its sucker and it will use Amtrak until the federal government steps in. This is why ICC regulations must be enforced. For every step Amtrak takes backward, a thousand steps must be taken forward. Otherwise it won't work.

During the Christmas rush, a Mr. Blank called Amtrak about reservations on the COAST STARLIGHT. He had been placed on a waiting list 5 weeks in advance, as space on that train was supposed to have been booked. But work had not begun on the wait-list, and the agent was instructed to "tell him he's number 10 on that list and it'll satisfy him for now." That train went out 30% empty because of mismanagement. Mr. Blank wasn't aboard.

While I'm probably the proudest person in this world to say I'm an Amtrak employe no way will I ever say it while on board some of our trains. I once did to one passenger on the STARLIGHT, and after one hour of valid complaints that was enough.

I don't expect this to be published and if I wanted it to be, your newsletter couldn't hold all I'd have to say. But thank God we have a publication like yours. You're the better half of my career. The side I have to look forward to, to enlighten my vision of thinking that somehow there must be a way to make Amtrak the number one mode of transportation in our country. Our chance surely is here, isn't it?

IN THIS ISSUE we are proud to present our fourth annual Review of the Year--a chronology of passenger train events of 1973. (Incidentally, we might be persuaded to compile our chronologies of 1970-1973 into a single booklet if there were a demand.) Please note also that for the first time we are publishing a 24-page issue. With passenger train news burgeoning, it becomes increasingly difficult to squeeze all the news of a fortnight into a single newsletter. If you send a contribution to RTN, its chances of being published are much better if it is as short and concise as possible. Our new subscription rate also takes effect with this issue. Single copy price is now 30¢, yearly subscription $7 by first class mail (rates overseas will be quoted on request). All back issues previous to this one, when available, are 25¢ each postpaid.

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Whole No. 75), First Issue of January, 1974. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709. Subscription $7.00 per year; single copy 30¢. STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Ruppenton, Editor-at-Large; Kenneth Maylath, East Coast Correspondent; Peter Roehm, Northeastern Correspondent; Peter Putnam Bretz, Roving Correspondent.
Scheduled mailing date for this issue: January 16, 1974.

RAILROAD REORGANIZATION ACT IS SIGNED INTO LAW

With surprisingly little fanfare in the press, the important bill to reorganize the bankrupt Northeast railroads, the Railroad Reorganization Act, was signed by President Nixon January 2. It leads to what the New York Journal of Commerce described as "the greatest corporate reorganization in (the nation's) history, and is said to be the largest government-backed restructuring of a private business enterprise in history. The seven bankrupt railroads, including primarily the giant Penn Central, will be reorganized as the Consolidated Rail Corporation. The other six are the Boston & Maine, Central of New Jersey, Reading, Erie Lackawanna, Lehigh Valley, and the Ann Arbor. Amtrak will benefit from the law, since track will be upgraded in some places where passenger trains run. Communities will have an opportunity to save profitless branch lines by guaranteeing local subsidies to keep them open, in the fashion in which states can now partially subsidize passenger train runs under Amtrak. See earlier issues of RTN for other details of the bill.

ICC PASSENGER TRAIN REGULATIONS ISSUED

Last issue we reported that Amtrak had asked the ICC to reopen its case for regulation of passenger train standards, as set forth in the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973. The ICC did so on Dec. 27, issuing a set of regulations entitled "Adequacy of Intercity Rail Passenger Service." The document is Ex Parte No. 277 (Sub-No. 1), available from the Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington DC 20423. The rules cover Amtrak trains as well as passenger trains of non-Amtrak railroads. They are to take effect 35 days from the date of issuance, tho they will probably be challenged in court by the railroads, thus delaying their effective date. The rules are designed to protect the passenger's interests when using rail service, and many of them, of course, are redundant, being currently practiced by Amtrak and some private railroads.

PASSENGERS CANNOT SUE AMTRAK TO RETAIN TRAINS

The Supreme Court rules on Jan. 9, in a 7-1 decision, that passengers cannot sue Amtrak to prevent the corporation from discontinuing trains. The National Association of Railroad Passengers was testing this possibility in bringing suit to challenge Amtrak's dropping of three trains in Georgia run by Central of Georgia, when Amtrak took over in 1971. A U.S. circuit court had ruled in NARP's favor, but the Supreme Court has reversed that court's ruling, deciding that the law establishing Amtrak allows only the Attorney General to take such action.

AMTRAK CANNOT SELL LIQUOR IN OKLAHOMA

On Jan. 9 a U.S. court of appeals in Denver decided that Amtrak must abide by the liquor laws of the state. It reversed an earlier district court's ruling. The case began July 18, 1972 when state officers boarded a train in Oklahoma City and arrested a lounge car attendant for selling liquor in his car.

NEWS BRIEFS: Greyhound Lines reported their busiest Christmas season in history, with over 30% more buses used than the year before... Amtrak's on-time performance figures for November, released late last month, show short-distance trains 71.5% on time, and long-distance runs 40.6% on-time, changed little from October. Turboliners were 22.7% on time, a small rise, while Metroliners were 70.4%, a drop, and corridor Turbo trains 41.8%, a small increase. Overall, Amtrak's trains were on time 63.9%, compared to 65.3% in October... Amtrak is finding a heavy demand for new train service. Between 200 and 300 requests have reached the corporation... By March 15, the Transportation Secretary is supposed to select a new experimental route for Amtrak to try, according to present law. We invite our readers to submit their own preferences and recommendations. Please make your communications as brief as possible... President Nixon pocket-vetoed a bill to allow operating subsidies for mass transit, saying he would introduce one of his own in January, in conjunction with his State of the Union message...

AMTRAK'S ROUGH WINTER

Just as our last issue went to press, an incredible series of Amtrak misfortunes began across the nation, in large part set off by the frigid winter weather gripping the country--but also by human error and by the deteriorated condition of railroad track and equipment. Amtrak got more publicity than it bargained for, most of it bad. Chicago newspaper editorials, for example, spoke of "incredible blunders," "contrived excuses" and "appallingly bad management." The shocking array of mishaps clearly pointed up Amtrak's continuing lack of control over its system.

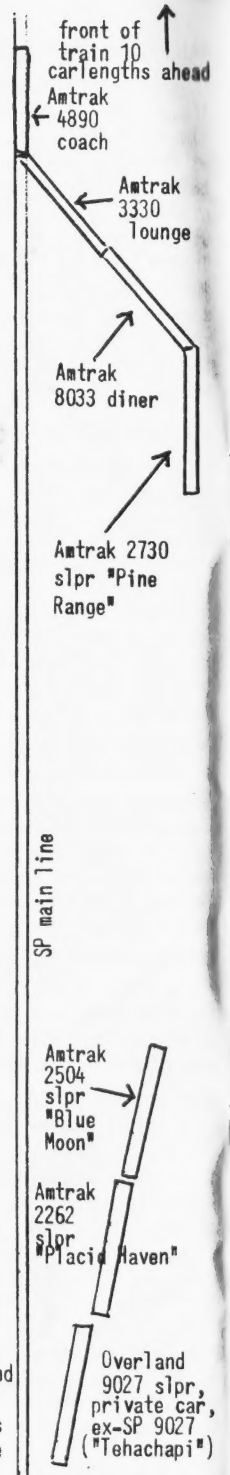
On Dec. 23, 24, and 29, freight wrecks on the B&M delayed the MONTREALER/WASHINGTONIAN. On Dec. 26 the northbound PANAMA LIMITED hit a truck at Monee, IL, seriously injuring the driver. This occurred at 8:45am with the train traveling at 72mph.

On Dec. 28 the southbound COAST STARLIGHT derailed near Anderson, CA (see diagram at right), injuring 84, 14 of whom required hospitalization, but none serious. The last 6 of 17 cars went on the ground at 3:48am. The cause was not formally determined. F. S. King, Amtrak's head of operations, flew to the scene and announced that a faulty switch had caused the wreck. SP denied this and claimed one of the cars was at fault. The remaining 11 cars continued on to Los Angeles. It was the first derailment on the route since Jan. 17, 1971, when the SP CASCADE left the tracks near the present scene.

On Dec. 29 the southbound COAST STARLIGHT suffered a minor derailment in the Portland, OR depot, with no injuries. On Dec. 31 heating failed aboard the SUPER CHIEF while it arrived at Chicago 8 hours late. On Dec. 31 the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR that left Chicago suffered an engine breakdown. At Galesburg, IL water was then erroneously pumped into the fuel tank, freezing it up. The third engine then gave out, and the train was stranded 13 hours while new power was found. At 8:20am Jan. 1 the trainload of 400 passengers got moving. A freight derailment slowed it further, and when it reached Sparks, NV the decision was made to turn the train for a return trip and bus passengers to Reno to catch a special stub train made up to keep Reno-Oakland traffic flowing. But there was a big snafu with the buses, and one driver left his passengers stranded for hours. Nearly blind, 76-year old Budd Smith of San Jose, CA was aboard, and on the stub train a toilet seat broke, almost flinging him to the floor. This was the last straw. Single-handed he challenged Amtrak, making newspaper headlines while contacting Senators and Amtrak officials with his complaints.

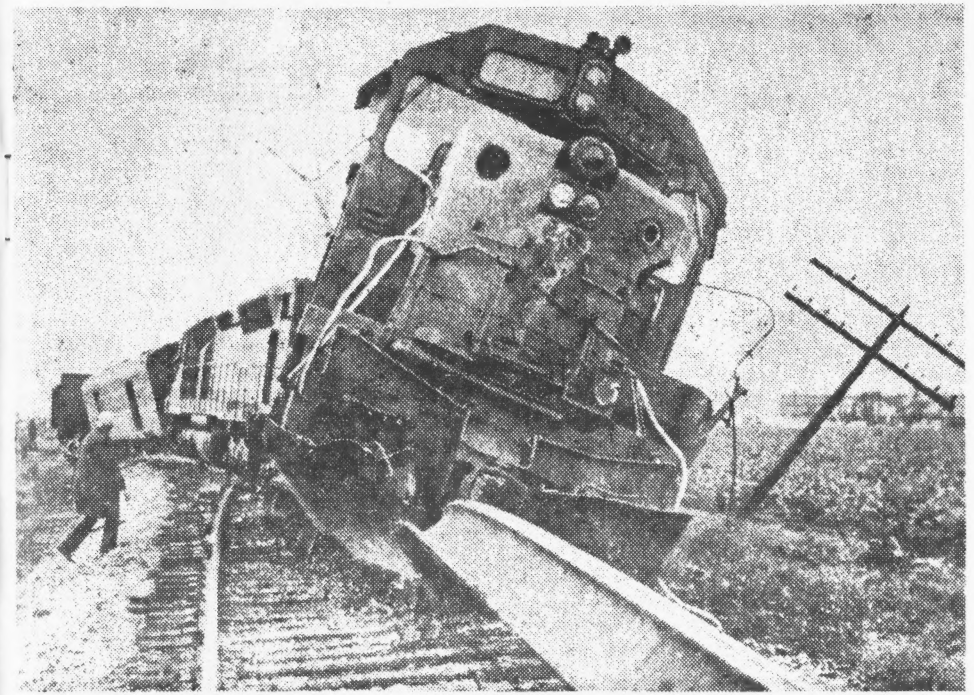
Jan. 1 was the worst day. The SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR that left Chicago faced a freight derailment near Denver, and it was given a rare detour over non-Amtrak Rio Grande. However, a freight derailment on that road sent it instead over the freight-only Rio Grande Royal Gorge route. Passengers arrived in Oakland (by bus) 32 hours late.

On Jan. 1 the CBS evening news featured a first-hand report on riding the FLORIDIAN, where a freight derailment forced a lengthy detour. Passengers interviewed who were happy at the start of the trip were down on Amtrak near the end. On Jan. 1 the eastbound NATIONAL LIMITED ran out of fuel due to a leak near Syracuse, MO and was towed by switchers to Jefferson City, where 125 passengers were stranded in the station overnight in below-zero weather. The



train had no heat and reached St. Louis 16½ hours late. On Jan. 1 a St. Louis-Chicago Turboliner with 90 passengers ran out of fuel at Bloomington, IL and arrived Chicago 5 hours late. The engine had been kept idling all night to prevent freezing, and no one checked the fuel level before departure.

Also on Jan. 1 the northbound COAST STARLIGHT was stranded in Klamath Falls, OR at 7:30am. A BN freight, which uses SP tracks there, had derailed at that city, blocking the line. The train could not be detoured on the Siskiyou line, since it was blocked by a slide in a tunnel Dec. 29; thus the train, with 313 passengers, waited 4½ hours until alternate bus and air shuttles could be arranged. But 25 passengers decided to stay with the train until it finally got moving. One passenger had also been on the STARLIGHT that derailed at Anderson earlier, and said he preferred being maroon-



The COAST STARLIGHT after its wreck at Newark, CA; SP engine 3204 on the point. A baggage dorm car went on its side. Photo courtesy of San Francisco Chronicle.

ed to being derailed. One woman reportedly phoned the SP agent at Klamath Falls to ask about her son, and when told that he probably flew on, the woman replied, "No, they wouldn't do that. He's a train man from way back." Whereupon the agent retorted, "Maybe this will cure him of it." But the mother had the last word: "Maybe we're going to cure SP of this!" Passengers were partying aboard the train, which finally got underway at 5am on Jan. 2

On Jan. 4 the southbound COAST STARLIGHT hit a truck at Newark, near Fremont, CA and derailed, inflicting 4 minor injuries. Two diesels and 8 cars went on the ground, forcing a first-time detour of the next two or three trains via the freight-only line thru Niles (see cover photo). The train, running 6 hours late, with 175 aboard 15 cars, hit the flatbed truck at 1:45pm and derailed into a cabbage field. Passengers were bused on. The truck driver was cited for failure to yield right-of-way to the train. A few days later the detour was again effected when a switch engine hit another truck there.

On Jan. 5 the SUPER CHIEF was blocked behind a UP freight derailment between Victorville and Barstow, CA. The train, loaded with 400 passengers, was held at Barstow at

(continued on page 18)

Urban-Suburban Transit

ABANDONMENT OF SP COMMUTER TRAINS PROPOSED

Consultants to the San Mateo County Transit Development Board in California proposed January 11 an abandonment of Southern Pacific commuter service on San Francisco's peninsula, replacing it by a BART extension fed by a comprehensive publicly owned bus service. The BART extension would run from Daly City to Redwood City, with connecting buses farther south. In an election next June 4, the county will be asked to approve formation of a county transit district, which will try to establish the bus service. Another election would be required to approve extension of BART in the county. In other news, State Senator James R. Mills was to introduce Jan. 14 a bill requiring all future mass transit projects in California to be constructed by the state Dept. of Transportation rather than by private engineering groups as with BART. This would take effect Jan. 1, 1975.

BOSTON TROLLEY LINE REOPENS

The suburban Highland branch line of the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority was reopened early this month after 3½ months of rebuilding. Some rails replaced dated back to about 1898. The Highland branch between Newton Highlands and Riverside station was opened in July, 1959, rebuilt from part of the New York Central's main line from Boston to its western suburbs. The MBTA also is planning to open the first portion of its new Haymarket North rapid transit line in a few months. Another project of MBTA is the installation of sensors between the tracks of Green Line trolleys. The electronic devices, guided by a computer in City Hall, will act upon traffic lights, lengthening or shortening their duration to help speed the flow of trolley traffic.

HARTFORD GETS NEW TRANSIT PLAN

Hartford, Connecticut now has almost nonexistent mass transit between towns in its metropolitan region. This would be remedied by a plan announced this month by the Connecticut Dept. of Transportation. A $94 million plan would increase rail commuter runs between Hartford and New Haven and between Hartford and Bristol. Expansion of Amtrak's service between Enfield and Hartford would come first, a run that attracts only about 40 riders daily. Express busways also would be built, partly on existing Penn Central right-of-way.

AN ATTEMPT TO LURE ANGELENOS OUT OF THEIR CARS

The Southern California Rapid Transit District has designated Jan. 20 as "Sunday Sample Day," when all bus fares will be reduced to 10¢ as an experiment. The reduction will be effective in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. Only about 500 buses run on Sundays, however, at intervals ranging from 10 minutes to 4 hours on various routes. The RTD also announced expansion of its rapid transit development measure planned for the general election next Nov. 5, probably by adding more bus lines to the 116-mile proposed system.

TRANSIT NEWS BRIEFS:

JOHN H. GRIFFIN, Manager of Passenger Operations for B&O, told members of the Alliance for Rail Commuter Progress, a consumer group, last month that he expects the Maryland D.O.T. to buy its commuter line between Washington and Brunswick, MD soon, and probably add more equipment... BART EXPECTS TO run out of cash in the 1974-75 fiscal year and is looking for new sources of revenue, including talking of fare increases. Failure of the transbay line to open yet is a major factor in reducing BART's expected revenue...GRAND TRUNK WESTERN Railroad, after negotiations with the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority, added a 4th train on the Detroit-Pontiac commuter line January 2...

canadian news letter

OTTAWA OFFICIALS ARE studying the possibility of nationalizing Canadian railroads, primarily Canadian Pacific. CP Rail, the railroad subsidiary of Canadian Pacific, may not be maintaining its system in top condition, said one official, and perhaps a government acquisition of all rail roadbeds is called for. Alberta has already asked the federal government to do this, so railroads could compete equitably with airlines, trucks and ships which already use government-owned facilities. An Ottawa official said the CP Rail might not mind the government taking over its system "after another ten years or so." The government already subsidizes CP Rail to a large extent; last year's subsidy was enough to nullify its income tax. In addition, the government spent $42 million on grain hopper cars that neither CN nor CP wanted to buy; it also built Great Slave Railway in the Northwest Territories and made other such monetary contributions. Since the government is already subsidizing railroads to such an extent, the argument goes, why not nationalize them so that they can in addition be operated in the public interest?

BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY has obtained three old steam logging locomotives which it is restoring to use on tourist runs out of North Vancouver beginning next summer. At least one may now be seen resting in the CP Rail Vancouver yards.

CANADIAN TRANSPORT COMMISSION'S directors may be "coming around" on the passenger train issue at the new year. Evidence is mounting that the CTC is beginning to see some of the more obvious trends of the time: 1) the relative success of Amtrak in the U.S., even with so many strikes against it, including the Washington administration; 2) increasing public unrest about transport expenditures, including citizen protests against freeway and airport construction in the larger Canadian cities; 3) an ever-increasing amount of pro-train sentiment in such bellwethers as newspaper letters columns; 4) the oil shortages.

For example, the CTC has vacillated almost two years on deciding some abandonment cases, such as CN Edmonton-Grande Centre; and NAR Edmonton-Dawson Creek, B.C. Many feel that CTC has decided "no more train-offs" for the interim, but does not have the guts to tell the railroads this, for fear of raising a storm from these enormous political pressure groups. On the other hand, the CTC order retaining all passenger trains in the maritimes, added to the already continuous public pressure for restoration of recently abandoned runs in Ontario, Newfoundland and Alberta, makes the situation appear formless at the moment, but subject to rapid change.

As in the U.S. thru the 1960s, passenger services will not be successful when top management wants them severely curtailed or ended entirely. As in the U.S. thru the 1960s, the situation cries for leadership, but so far none is forthcoming. It can only be hoped, many say, that legislation leading toward an Amtrak-style Canadian passenger rail system can be developed, but this will take a great deal of legislative skill among each of the three major political parties--a difficult task during a period when Canada is governed by a minority government.

CALGARY CITY GOVERNMENT has quietly decided to end trolley coach operations in the Stampede City, but has not yet announced the end of the electric operations, fearing a storm of citizen protest. Nevertheless, the city is making discrete, off-the-record inquiries to other Canadian trolley coach operators in an effort to sell the coaches and electric facilities. Trolleys now operate Monday-Friday only. Weekend and holiday service is provided by diesels on all electric routes.

A HEATED DISCUSSION arose in British Columbia over whether to follow the U.S. in a move to daylight saving time early this year. The province will be the only one to make the switch, and it has been delayed until February 3, and might possibly be postponed or called off even then.

BY ORDERS OF anti-passenger CN executive vice president Robert Bandeen, who has occasionally said in private that his goal is to make CN the "SP of the North," the CN passenger car inventory is in the process of being reduced about 15%. Rather than scrap the oldest cars (CN has many heavyweights from the 1920s still on the roster), crews are salvaging many newer lightweight cars, including U.S.-built 10-6 sleepers. This puts a crimp in passenger planning, and prevents CN from fielding full trains in many areas.

The CN car inventory reduction has taken place during a period when the need for new railway passenger cars is readily apparent; and both CN and CP have already informally told Ottawa that any new passenger equipment will have to be built and paid for by the federal government--as were the new grain cars delivered last year. Once this fact becomes generally known, it can become an issue for MPs to deal with, and may become the first step toward a Canadian Amtrak.

CN'S TURBO TRAINS have reportedly replaced a Rapido on the Toronto-Montreal route, and have been running since December 17 without mishap.

SEVERE WINTER STORMS that began sweeping much of North America in mid-December hit Canada, seriously disrupting transportation. But passenger trains apparently ran reliably, and no horror stories such as those heard in the U.S. have yet come out of Canada. CN's TurboTrains were reported running on time shortly after their resumption of service before Christmas; but buses were being delayed up to two hours, autos were stranded, and up to half of airline flights were cancelled. Over five inches of snow hit Quebec Dec. 17 and on the 20th six inches fell in Ottawa in 24 hours, eight in Toronto. During this time, neither CN nor CP had to revise their train schedules. The railroads were reported booked solid, and added extra equipment during the storms. CN's consists went back to normal as soon as the weather cleared. Reservations between Toronto and Montreal and to Western Canada on the SUPER CONTINENTAL were reported especially heavy.

CANADIAN TRANSPORT COMMISSION in late December ordered the continuation of passenger service that CN and CP Rail had sought to discontinue. Nine runs were involved, with a reported total deficit of about $3 million. The energy shortage was given as a major reason for the decision, which makes the railroads eligible to receive an 80% subsidy of their losses. We will seek to report more details on this later.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY has been criticized for the quality of its track construction in a report released Dec. 21 by two senior railway engineers. The report says that while BCR has for years laid more new track than any other railroad in North America, it has done the job only to "pioneering standards." The two engineers, from CN and CP, examined the entire length of BCR's track, including its extension line to Dease Lake. They reported that much work must be done on the Prince George-Fort Nelson line to put it in good working condition.

CALGARY'S DIAL-A-BUS SERVICE got underway Dec. 17. It operates from 9:30am to 3:30pm and rush hour service will be added in March.

CANADIAN NATIONAL IS calling for bids for demolition of its ferry slip, wharf and dry dock at Kelowna, B.C., on the Okanagan Subdivision.

CP RAIL'S NEW barge and rail car vessel, "Carrier Princess," operating from Vancouver, has been sailing 1:45am from Vancouver for Swartz Bay, 18 miles north of Victoria, returning at 6am. These trips are advertised as "Our incredibly late departure" and "Incredibly early departure" respectively.

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CHRISTMAS ON THE NEAR TOTTERINGS

by Glenn Lee

The Far Tottering was perhaps the most wonderful railway ever run in the wry, crisp world of British humour. The Far Tottering was a combination of Titfield Thunderbolt, Fiddletown & Copperopolis, and Toonerville Trolley, with a passenger list from the pages of Damon Runyon, Agatha Christie, and Patrick Dennis. Its delicate rolling stock of filagree daintiness compelled vast quantities of sentimental romance and nostalgia. Perhaps the most wonderful of the series was entitled "Christmas on the Far Tottering," and some day I hope I'll receive a copy at Christmas.

My own world along Puget Sound includes some FT operations--invoking nostalgia and sentimental regard despite the fact that things could be much better. Because they're so close to home I've regarded them as Near Totterings. And so a few days before Christmas, 1973, I was compelled to renew my acquaintance with: 1) Amtrak's PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL; 2) CP Rail's Esquimalt & Nanaimo RDC run; and 3) CP Rail's Nanaimo-Vancouver ferry service, on reduced schedule in fall, 1973.

I arrived at the Seattle King Street station well before the 6:15pm departure of the northbound PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL. The northbound COAST STARLIGHT was posted for a 6:25pm arrival, but the stationmaster said the P.I. would not be held for the connection. With some time to spare, I walked to the Holgate Street coach yards, which have been practically cleaned out by the fall season car shortage. As on the Far Tottering, a lot of rolling stock of questionable dependability is hitting the high iron. When I returned to the depot, I noted that the MOUNT RAINIER, due to depart for Portland at 5:30pm, included NP 357, an ex-NORTH COAST LIMITED sleeper bleached and faded from years of disuse. Rescued from the dead line in the nick of time, NP 357 was an "overload coach" snatched from the oblivion of the scrapper's torch. Two additional sleepers of 1947 vintage, GN 1172 "Grinnell Glacier" and GN 1186 "Pumpelly Glacier," had also been slated for the run, but were scratched when GN 1087, an ex-CNW coach, was made available.

Returning to the waiting room, I noted that the STARLIGHT was now posted for 6:40pm arrival, which meant she'd probably be in about 7pm. At 6:15pm, on time, the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL pulled out, BN E unit 9937 leading a four-car consist: SP&S 308, NP 497 Travellers Rest car, GN 1078, and ex-TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR dome car "Silver Stream." There were 25 passengers aboard, with five more to climb on at Edmonds and Everett. Connecting passengers on the STARLIGHT numbered 50, but Amtrak would bus them to B.C. tonight. Without those fifty passengers from California, the P.I. seemed quite empty, yet pleasant as we rolled along the shoreline of Puget Sound, free this evening from the heavy rains of the previous several weeks.

There were perhaps six passengers in "Silver Stream," which is showing its age. Upholstery is cracked on many seats, exposing the padding; but the mural on the dome bulkhead at the rear of the forward coach section, entitled "Laclede at St. Louis - 1763," still shows well the explorer landing in a big war canoe propelled by stoic Indians. I remained in the dome until Everett, to maximize scenic viewing. North of Everett, there's an hour of straight, flat inland running, the best time for dinner.

Leaving Everett, I noted that the P.I. is back to the "regular" Everett route. Before Amtrak, BN's B.C. trains operated under Everett in the tunnel used by transcontinental trains, and then poked thru an industrial area. The present route, via ex-GN track, requires use of the lower platform at the Everett station, but saves a mile, and some 4-6 minutes of running time, and gives a smoother ride.

Dinner on NP 497 wasn't top cuisine, but did, to use the words of late Time publisher Luce, "stoke the furnace."

The Travellers Rest car, rebuilt in 1954 from a coach-coffee shop built in 1947, has held up remarkably well, still looking like one of the finest railway cars ever to roll in the U.S., with hand-paintings of western scenes from the days of Lewis & Clark decorating the walls and ceilings. I was sorry that so few passengers were enjoying the car this evening. The 14-seat counter area has been reduced to 12 seats by removal of two swivel seats nearest the center of the car. One minor discord note plagued my meal: a long steel bar, used to bolt the storage lockers near the forward vestibule, had been left dangling by the crew, and went "clank-clank" thru dinner.

Two of the train crew sat with me as I finished by meal. They were concerned that B.C. would not go to daylight saving time Jan. 6 (it has since elected to do so in February) and that the P.I. would be leaving Vancouver southbound at 5:30 am Vancouver time. "We hardly get anybody now at 6:30am," said the conductor, "so I don't know how we'll get anyone at all an hour earlier." He said that Amtrak seemed interested only in California passengers for the P.I. and not local business.

Before leaving the new Mount Vernon-Burlington station (about a mile north of Mount Vernon and two miles south of Burlington), I returned to the dome, anticipating a beautiful ride around the western flanks of the mountain range at Chuckanut Drive, the scenic approach to Bellingham. We were about seven minutes late, and hurrying.

There was only one child on the train, a boy of about nine, and he was busy jumping up and down the dome steps, walking back and forth straddling the dome aisle, and playing with the footrests clank-clank-clank, while his permissive parents literally and figuratively looked the other way. After several minutes of this, in my politest and most refined bark, I put my head up fairly close to his and said: "Why don't you just sit still for a while." There was a long silence, and his eyes grew larger when he said: "uh.....o.k." and he then disappeared. The adults in the dome then experienced peace and quiet as we twisted along the curving shores and thru the tunnels south of Bellingham.

Emerging from the last of the four tunnels, the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL pulled alongside a Christmas ship; a pleasure craft heavily decorated with colored lights from which Christmas music is broadcast to shoreside homes. The vessel switched her lights off and on to salute the P.I., and the engineer responded with a "shave and a haircut, six bits" blast on the Burlington unit's chime horn.

We left Bellingham 12 minutes down, and even tho we made it thru customs quickly, with only one Canadian officer "working" the train at White Rock, we remained late. Approaching New Westminster, we crawled over the Fraser River Bridge, now seemingly slower than ever. Here I had an opportunity to talk with a college student bound east to Toronto via Air Canada 747. Last summer he had used the CN SUPER to Toronto, and found it so-so; but returned on the EMPIRE BUILDER, and visibly brightened at the thought of Amtrak. "Boy, was it plush," he said of the EB. "They had 450 passengers the day I rode, and had 700 before that," he enthused. It's good to hear this kind of news getting around, I felt.

We left New Westminster at 10:05pm, 10 minutes late, and one mile from the Vancouver CN station, at 10:23pm, began wying--a long, slow, tortuous process that irritates the passengers no end, just as they are anticipating a quick arrival. Behind me in "Silver Stream" were two middle-aged brothers, who had talked nonstop since departing Seattle. The older one stopped, looked around and said: "Why don't they do this s**t after the passengers get off?"

Our back-in arrival was 10:42pm, -12". I arrived at the taxi stand to note that the first cab to leave was filled with train crew members. The second cab also filled with "rails" while the passengers were left standing. A few minutes later more taxis came and finally the passengers were served.

* * *

Second lap of my trip was to have been on CP Rail's new "Carrier Princess" on the Vancouver-Nanaimo ferry run, substi-

(continued on page 11)

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

ANNUAL CHRONOLOGY OF RAIL EVENTS

1973

JANUARY

5 White House promised to release funds for San Joaquin Valley train at end of fiscal year
WASHINGTONIAN derailed at open switch at Randolph, VT--no injuries
6 End of winter travel schedules on Amtrak; COAST STARLIGHT back to tri-weekly
9 White House announced sharp Amtrak budget cut for next fiscal year; OMB to set "guidelines," requiring dropping several long-distance trains
15 Local passengers barred from riding BROADWAY LIMITED in N.E. Corridor
20 Long Island Rail Road strike truce began, restoring service
27 First INTER-AMERICAN ran, Fort Worth to Laredo
29 White House announced $93 million budget for Amtrak for 1973-1974
BART Oakland-Richmond line opened for revenue service

FEBRUARY

1 Amtrak issued first annual report; 1972 income $162.6 million, expenses $310 million, net loss $147.5 million
6 Boston subway fire; 1 dead, 94 hospitalized
8 One-day Penn Central strike
SUNSET LIMITED engines derailed westbound in San Antonio
12 Both SUNSETS detoured between Sanderson & Rosenberg, TX on T&P due to trestle fire
ICG commuter train derailed in Chicago; no injuries
15 New Amtrak consolidated regional timetable issued
23 Amtrak announced re-routing of TEXAS CHIEF on SP thru Dallas effective June 10
27 San Francisco approved purchase of 80 new trolleys from Boeing Vertol

MARCH

7 Amtrak signed contracts to acquire two French-built Turbos with option to buy eight more
8 Amtrak trains rescued 1000 stranded Greyhound bus passengers in Southern snowstorm
11 CBS special TV documentary on Amtrak problems raised many questions
13 Auto-Train collided with lumber truck & derailed at Hortense, GA, injuring 20; runs cut in half for twelve days
14 PC work train backed into Metroliner #113 in Cheverly, MD; 14 injured
Amtrak TV commercials began in Northeast
15 DOT report on Amtrak issued--recommended dropping FLORIDIAN, NATIONAL LIMITED, POTOMAC SPECIAL, and trains 98-99
16 SUPER CHIEF derailed west of Newton, KS; no injuries, minor delay
18 BROADWAY LIMITED derailed westbound at East Palestine, OH; 1 dead, 18 injured

APRIL

5 Amtrak announced discontinuance of POTOMAC SPECIAL, effective May 5
(approx. date) SP announced refusal to run TEXAS CHIEF Dallas-Houston without $7.7 million track work; dispute sent to National Arbitration Board
6 White House rescinded its promise to release funds for San Joaquin train; announced permanent impounding of funds for St. Louis-Laredo route
Roger Lewis endorsed White House's $93 million budget for Amtrak, calling it "tight"

7 COAST STARLIGHT ran out of fuel at Puyallup, WA, running northbound
10 SUNSET LIMITED detoured eastbound on KCS-MP-ICG when barges damaged railroad bridge near New Orleans
16 Inaugural run of new commuter cars on PC New Haven Division arrived late in Manhattan while older train stalled in tunnel
25 PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL hit truck southbound and derailed in Surrey, B.C.; no injuries
26 Southbound COAST STARLIGHT detoured first time thru Deschutes River Canyon, OR
28 Massive SP ammunition train explosion at Roseville, CA; SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR detoured on WP via Feather River Canyon first time
29 Amtrak fare increases in West and Midwest became effective
Last portion of New York's El closed down
CN's Ottawa-Toronto EXEC began operation

MAY

1 Amtrak second anniversary ceremonies in Washington and Chicago
5 Last run of POTOMAC SPECIAL, Washington-Parkersburg
7 First run of BLUE RIDGE, Washington-Cumberland
9 PC commuter train derailed at Branchville, CT; 1 dead, 2 injured
15 PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL riders required to leave train for border inspection
21 BART Concord line opened for revenue operations
24 Sunset Route blocked two days by exploding bombs on SP freight at Tully, AZ

JUNE

1 Freight derailment on RF&P in Alexandria, VA snarled East Coast train traffic
5 (approx. date) Senator Tunney proposed $8 million bill to study high-speed ground travel on West Coast between Canada and Mexico
6 Senate committee proposed $125 Amtrak budget for 1973-1974
7 Dallas arbitration panel reached no agreement, delaying June 10 startup date for TEXAS CHIEF rerouting thru Dallas
8 PC commuter train hit a local train at Mt. Vernon, NY; 1 dead, 100 hurt
10 Summer schedules began on Amtrak; new East Coast timetable only issued; COAST STARLIGHT and SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR began daily operation; fourth weekend SAN DIEGAN added
SUNSET LIMITED derailed eastbound at San Antonio
13 NORTH COAST HIAWATHA began running Seattle-Spokane on GN route, as separate train from the EMPIRE BUILDER
President's Council on Environmental Quality asked Americans to save gasoline and use public transportation
15 CAROLINA SPECIAL began summer season runs
18 Federal Aviation Agency report showed Metroliner ridership increasing faster than N.Y.-Washington airlines, 18.6% versus 3%
Lindenwold line 5-day strike began
22 First of Amtrak's new SDP40F diesels used, on SUPER CHIEF
CN reintroduced Turbo Toronto-Montreal; immediately broke down; withdrawn after four days
26 NARP asked Congress to abolish Amtrak's monopoly on auto-ferry service in order to aid Auto-Train
27 Royal train tour began in Canada, with visit of royal party from England

JULY

1 Amtrak package express service began
Amtrak removed premium fare on Turbos
Auto-Train added third run on East Coast route
2 Amtrak posted train-off notices for NATIONAL LIMITED, FLORIDIAN, and #98-99
BART strike began, lasting a month
Grand Central Station, New York, began early morning hour closures
12 PANAMA LIMITED derailed southbound near Chebanse, IL; 85 injured
15 Fiftieth anniversary celebration of Alaska Railroad completion
20 CN Turbo being readied for purchase by Amtrak destroyed in wreck at Lachine, Que.
22 Interstate Commerce Commission delayed three Amtrak train-off petitions
26 Canadian railroad strike began
Amtrak asked for design proposals for new passenger cars

AUGUST

1 Updated Amtrak nationwide timetable issued, listing BLUE RIDGE and augmented SAN DIEGAN service
2 One hundredth anniversary of San Francisco cable cars
6 Two French-built Turbos for Amtrak arrived in New Jersey
13 Highway Aid Bill signed into law; first busting of highway trust fund for transit
15 Amtrak East Coast timetable issued, listing BLUE RIDGE
17 Atlanta-Macon, GA rapid transit system proposed
British Columbia Ferries strike began, lasting three days
21 PANAMA LIMITED derailed northbound north of Champaign, IL; no injuries
28 Collapse of New York subway tunnel; 1 dead, 18 injured
30 Amtrak withdrew train-off petitions for NATIONAL LIMITED and FLORIDIAN

SEPTEMBER

1 Amtrak lifted ban on cigar and pipe smoking in club cars, using segregated sections instead
7 Canadian trains ran again after end of strike
10 Senator Weicker announced that he will introduce bill next year to totally nationalize all passenger and commuter train service
20 Westbound SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR hit oil rig near Gilcrest, CO; minor injuries
25 Roger Lewis hospitalized for cardiovascular operation
27 BART ordered 100 more cars from Rohr Corporation
28 Inaugural ceremony for French Turboliners in Chicago

OCTOBER

1 French-built Turboliners began revenue operation Chicago-St. Louis
4 ILLINOIS ZEPHYR derailed 25 miles north of LaSalle, IL; 6 injured
10 PC commuter train derailed in the Bronx, collapsing a signal bridge, blocking line; one injury
11 Washington-Richmond high-speed transit system proposed
12 Amtrak ordered 57 Metroliner cars from Budd Co., 70 diesels from EMD, and 11 diesels from GE
TEXAS CHIEF detoured via Tulsa due to flooding
14 SUPER CHIEF detoured via Amarillo due to flooding and freight derailment
18 GEORGE WASHINGTON/RILEY rerouted via Logansport & Richmond, IN as PC track failed to meet new FRA standards
19 Turboliner hit auto at Odell, IL, killing occupants
22 Canadian agency established to assist in developing urban transit systems
25 (approx. date) National Arbitration Panel said TEXAS CHIEF should use SP rails Dallas-Houston, and Amtrak and SP should share costs of upgrading track
28 Amtrak's fall timetables effective; many Northeast Corridor changes; stop at Truckee, CA inaugurated on Overland Route
Amtrak announced plans to upgrade FLORIDIAN and add auto-carrying cars

NOVEMBER

3 President Nixon signed Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973, in surprise move
5 BART San Francisco-Daly City line began revenue operations
6 New York transportation bond issue rejected by voters
7 President Nixon's energy crisis address; leads to new run on passenger trains
16 Fare increases on Amtrak took effect; about 10% higher

22 Amtrak's biggest Thanksgiving weekend began, inspired by fuel shortages; train station scenes described like "old days"
26 Amtrak asked ICC to establish passenger train standards, as per Congress' rule
27 White House fuel allocation plan gives top priority to railroads

DECEMBER

8 Rumor that President Nixon would ride train in fuel shortage fell thru
9 SP boxcar explosion at Oxnard, CA delayed northbound COAST STARLIGHT
10 GEORGE WASHINGTON hit a truck in Manassas, VA, injuring two
11 Train service in San Joaquin Valley next spring announced by Amtrak
14 Amtrak winter schedules began; FLORIDIAN retained old schedule, after earlier two days-one night schedule was announced
SHORELINER, reinstated second Turbo run, began New York-Boston
15 Bill to set year-round daylight saving time signed, effective January 6
COAST STARLIGHT detoured on WP between Sacramento, CA and Klamath Falls, OR
17 First of series of severe winter storms hit East, delaying trains and putting some Metroliners out of commission
Decatur-Chicago ILLINI began operation
CN Turbos back on Toronto-Montreal route
23 SHAWNEE delayed 13 hours by freight derailment
26 Northbound PANAMA LIMITED hit truck near Monee, IL, injuring driver
28 Southbound COAST STARLIGHT derailed at Anderson, CA; 84 injuries
29 Southbound COAST STARLIGHT derailed in Portland, OR depot; no injuries
31 SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR had water placed in fuel tank in Galesburg, IL, delaying train which then suffered a comedy of errors

The year just ended was one of great importance for American passenger train service. The early part of the year was full of uncertainty, as the White House clearly had the upper hand in working to cut back Amtrak by limiting its funding and demanding that it eliminate routes which did not meet an arbitrary standard of income set by the Administration. As early as January it was widely known that the White House intended to trim Amtrak's budget back to try to make it keep only relatively "profitable" routes. But there was powerful support for Amtrak in Congress and among the American people, and senators such as Vance Hartke pushed thru a bill that increased Amtrak's funding well beyond the $93 million level wanted by the White House. The success of Congress's move to give Amtrak a bigger push was in part due to the Watergate scandal revelations in Washington and the exodus from the White House of advisers intent on doing Amtrak in. (One man close to the scene told RTN that John Ehrlichman personally advised Nixon to cut Amtrak back.) Congress was becoming more aggressive in asserting its role, and President Nixon was turning more conciliatory.

Finally, by October, Congress had agreed on a bill that would substantially increase Amtrak's power to use Federal funds to expand and operate its system, and would guarantee Congress and the public a bigger say in the workings of American train travel, while requiring that the railroads put in a better performance for Amtrak. Nearly everyone expected President Nixon to veto the bill, but on Nov. 3 the surprise announcement came that he had signed it. His first energy crisis address to the people was but four days away, and he named the crisis as a major reason for increased passenger train support.

For the last two months of the year, the energy crisis, according to polls, was deemed the most important problem facing the nation, and people were flocking back to trains in unexpected numbers. Amtrak began a difficult winter--one fraught with wrecks and weather problems--, attempting to serve the traveling public with its pitifully small fleet of passenger cars. Amtrak had taken delivery of two French-built Turbo Trains and was starting to order new cars, but for a long time to come would be hard pressed to employ its aging equipment in serving a public now needing and demanding more than ever the efficiencies and pleasures of train travel.

(continued from page 10)
tuting until the "Princess of Vancouver" returns from refit early in 1974. For many years CP departures have been 3am-11am-7pm daily, and CP's billboards and direction signs continue to carry this schedule. So it was with confidence that I arrived at Pier A-3 at 10:38am via taxi. I knew something was wrong when the clerks behind the ticket wicket all turned and looked; and yes, "Carrier Princess" had departed at 10am on her one daily trip! Rats! Only CP would pull a stunt like this, I thought; so it was over to the bus depot, hoping I'd get a quick BC ferries bus for Nanaimo, about a 3-hour trip, to catch the 2:50pm RDC run south from Nanaimo to Victoria. Upon arriving at the bus station, I found that the bus had left at 10:35am, with the next at 11:50am, which would have put me in Nanaimo at 2:50pm, the exact moment the Budd car was due to leave for Victoria.

Because friends were to meet me in the Victoria E&N depot at the Budd car's arrival, I took the 12 noon BC ferry bus direct for Victoria, which put me aboard the "Queen of Esquimalt" at 12:45pm for her 1pm departure. The "Esquimalt" is one of the recently "stretched" high-speed boats on the Tsawwassen-Swartz Bay service, offering good food service in attractive surroundings; and soon we were underway.

Looking back toward the city from the ferry slip, I noted that the entire Vancouver urbanized area, from Fort Coquitlam on the east to the Sechelt Peninsula headlands on the west, was covered by a thick, brownish-yellow bank of smog, reaching halfway up the mountains behind North Vancouver. Frightening, like The End Of The World; and another good reason to "get to sea."

After a pleasant voyage, I had a chance to talk to my seatmate on the bus, a woman in her 80s who can only be described as High Far Tottering. She had emigrated to Canada in 1913, and had returned to England in 1916 to serve as a nurse in World War I. She had crossed the Atlantic 16 times by Cunard liner, including the Aquitania, Ascania, Ivernia, Scithia, and Queen Mary. She hadn't liked the Queen Mary. "Too large, too cold, too impersonal," she said.

In Victoria I went to the E&N station, recently constructed on Esquimalt Road to replace the downtown Victoria terminal demolished for a new approach to the Inner Harbour bridge. The tiny waiting room contains eight chairs. Two card-tables, if added, would fill the room up. My friends were somewhat surprised to see me arrive ahead of the train; and we chatted until CP Budd car 9199, an RDC-2, popped in about 10 minutes late to drop off seven passengers. We watched it proceed a block farther to the ancient E&N roundhouse, and then proceeded to the nearby Princess Mary restaurant, constructed from portions of the old CP coastal liner, for a fine dinner....

* * *

On a windy morning, a growing crowd awaited the northbound RDC car, due to leave Victoria at 8:30am. Six older persons hovered in the waiting room, while most elected to brave the elements on the narrow platform. Some sat in the cars of friends nearby. The friendly agent regretted he could not sell me a thru Victoria-Vancouver ticket. "We used to have a combination ticket that gave you your taxi to the boat at Nanaimo, but they took it away from us," he said. Some of the passengers on the platform were NARP types. One said there was serious work afoot to restore CP passenger service to Port Alberni, reached by a mountain pass with scenery "better than the Malahat." The channel 2 "Hourglass" TV program has been pushing this, I learned, and it would probably mean a 2-car Budd train Victoria to Parksville, with one RDC branching off there. Many passengers complained about the train running the "wrong way." They'd like it to come south to Victoria in the morning, arriving before noon, then leaving northbound at 5:30 or 6.

But good schedule or no, the car filled with 25 congenial passengers, and we were off thru the rain. After depositing one at Langford, we climbed the Malahat grade bumpily and noisily, with trees of the Forest Primeval closing in tightly. Soon we crept across the two high, spidery trestles, and thru the short tunnel before looking out at stunning views of island, fjord below, and distant mountain ranges. Surely worth the price of admission.

Altho the car doesn't serve Victoria very well, it actually serves as a "market train" for mid-island residents going north to Duncan and Nanaimo for a mid-day of shopping or pleasure. As we proceeded north, we picked up passengers at flagstops and little shelters, almost as if we were an interurban car from another era. Despite the rain, the passengers seemed to be enjoying their trips. A green and white flag on the platform at Chemainus announced a fare at this "f" stop, and as we pulled away, the conductor, with respect in his voice, said to the lady agent: "In case I don't see you before, A Merry Christmas to ya." She gave him a big smile before he said in jest: "You planning to stay sober?" She replied with a hearty wave and an "only you'd say that, you rascal" look as we pulled away.

With 27 aboard, we pulled into Nanaimo on time. The Nanaimo depot, recently hit by fire, is still standing; but the lone mimeo announcement in the waiting room said that CP Rail would like to close the station in favor of a regional service center in Vancouver.

* * *

"Carrier Princess" was being loaded by truck drivers parking heavy rigs on her main cardeck as a Christmas crowd gathered, burdened by packages and children. The heavy rain was now pouring, and a large lineup of autos awaited the single daily 1:30pm departure for Vancouver. "Carrier Princess" is a barge with a small passenger lounge built into her meager superstructure. But as the steward said to some light-hearted complaining, "she floats and she's fast." About 1:10pm the purser let the word out informally to the crowd of foot passengers that many of the autos waiting to board had several passengers, and that since "Carrier Princess" is limited by the Coast Guard to 262 passengers, the foot passengers might be turned away.

This visibly irritated two men, a slender man in his 40s and a college student perhaps 6'4" and 220 lbs or more. Both began arguing with the purser, who postponed the shouting by saying: "We don't know yet, let's just wait it out." Had we not been allowed to board, we were on our own to get a B.C. Ferry bus later in the day. The college student then left the waiting room to walk thru the rain looking over the waiting autos. He returned a few minutes later to tell the purser he had found a friend in one of the autos, and wondered if he could get aboard, via auto, to make his CANADIAN train for Regina, if he sat in the friend's car. The purser wasn't too happy with this, and talking down to the student, said: "You'd just be bumping one of these people in here if you did that, you know." The man in his 40s recited a litany of complaints against the Canadian Pacific, but eventually we all boarded via the main cardeck thru the rain, and she got underway at 1:42pm, 12 minutes late.

The crossing took only 2 hours and 10 minutes, a very fast trip. We arrived Vancouver Pier A-3 at 3:52pm and disembarked only moments before it <u>really</u> began pouring. Thus ended my reacquaintance with these pleasant, if less than fully adequate operations. I'm hoping that each will soon find its way into the pages of cartoon humor, replaced quickly by capable, high-quality service and operation as a part of improvements in public transportation that are coming fast.

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QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"The energy crunch has Amtrak dancing to a new tune. Hundreds of songs have been written about the glory days and the decline of the nation's railroads. But instead of writing about the Wabash Cannonball or the City of New Orleans, perhaps it is time for a new lyric, such as 'Amtrak's Busting Out All Over'--because that's what's happening."
--Houston Post, January 6

"But one result of the gasoline shortage is surely going to be at least a momentary resurgence of train travel--all too often an American horror in recent years, when it was available at all, but once a comfortable, economical, efficient and sometimes elegant means of getting about. Train travel is still like that in Europe and Japan, and it can be here, where Amtrak has been slowly reviving it. The gas shortage may be the final development needed to turn a sizable number of Americans back to the trains, which can carry more people for less fuel than any other vehicle."
--Tom Wicker in New York Times, January 6

"And Amtrak is suddenly the hottest show in town, receiving the number of reservations it expected five years from now."
--New York Times, December 2

"A significant report from Amtrak tells of considerable increases in rail passenger traffic during November and December, the first two energy-crisis months. ... At its outset two years ago, there were many who said all Amtrak had to sell was nostalgia. It's now clear that it has energy conservation to sell also, and just in time."
--San Francisco Chronicle, January 7

"One of the more beneficial effects of the energy crisis is that people are rediscovering trains. Railway terminals are losing that ghostly, abandoned look as airline reservations become harder to get and auto travel grows more chancy and more expensive because of the fuel shortage. Officials of Amtrak are worrying less about where to find passengers to fill their trains and more about finding the equipment with which to accommodate the soaring demand for seats. The back-to-the-train movement has some built-in limitations. But it makes sense from the standpoint both of energy conservation and environmental protection. It should be encouraged."
--Los Angeles Times, January 2

"The car has long been seen by psychologists as an extension or amplification of the personality of the owner. Putting an extended 1930's sort of family into such a vehicle for three or four hours on a Sunday afternoon turned it into a sort of orgone box of deviated libidos, in which parents, grandparents and siblings played their assigned roles with all the imploded unpleasantness of a Pinter play."
--Tom Buckley in New York Times, December 2

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"Surveying the nationwide fuel shortage at the start of the four-day Christmas weekend, which is generally the deadliest of the year on the road, the National Safety revised its projected holiday death toll downward 5050 persons to a total of 550 to 650."
--New York Times, December 23

(What will this do to zero population growth?)

"A little more than half of nearly 19,000 cars have been refurbished since Amtrak came into existence two-and-one-half years ago."
--Jane Morse in San Jose Mercury-News, January 6

"The 167-car train, which left Seattle Thursday about noon, derailed at a highway crossing near the Shasta County town about 10 miles south of Redding. The last six cars left the track."
--Oakland Tribune, December 29

(With all that equipment, Amtrak can afford to throw a few cars on the ground.)

AMAZING SWITZERLAND BY RAIL AND LAKE STEAMER

Our fifth visit to Switzerland and second trip sponsored by CANNONBALL RAIL EXCURSIONS. The itinerary is a modification of SWISSAIR's RAILROADER trip but is one day longer, operates in peak season, leaving Friday, June 14 & returning Sunday, June 30. Fine weather usual in Switzerland during this period.

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NCH

AMTRAK TRAINS 9 & 10 - THE NORTH COAST HIAWATHA
FIFTH IN A SERIES OF FEATURES ON AMTRAK TRAINS

The Chicago-Seattle NORTH COAST HIAWATHA did not appear in that first, May 1, 1971 Amtrak timetable. The train began under Amtrak with the July 12, 1971 schedule, having been added at the insistence of influential Montana Senator Mike Mansfield, that the population centers of Southern Montana have train service. When Amtrak took over, only the EMPIRE BUILDER, also a Chicago-Seattle train (see RTN, Vol. 3 No. 18), served the northern tier of the nation. The NCH was added as an "experimental" route, and last year quietly absorbed into the basic system, giving it permanent status.

On June 22, 1972, the Chicago-bound NCH was sporting an Amtrak-repainted CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR dome observation when such cars were just starting to get out on the rails. Gilbert Hulin photographed the very mixed consist near Bozeman, Montana.

The train runs tri-weekly, leaving Chicago Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, and departing Seattle Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. At first the train ran combined with the EMPIRE BUILDER on the segments between Chicago and Minneapolis, and between Spokane and Seattle (in the immediate pre-Amtrak days, Burlington Northern ran the BUILDER and the NORTH COAST LIMITED combined between Chicago and St. Paul). Starting last June 13 (see RTN, Vol. 3 No. 12) the NCH's route was changed to run on the old Great Northern line between Seattle and Spokane via Wenatchee, while the EMPIRE BUILDER continued its more southerly route thru Pasco, thus reversing the pre-Amtrak situation.

As with other Amtrak trains, the NCH was unnamed and retained its former railroad numbers until the schedule change of Nov. 14, 1971, when it became the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, a combination of the names NORTH COAST LIMITED and Milwaukee Road's HIAWATHA trains, the latter running on Milwaukee's Chicago-Minneapolis line as does the NCH (rather than using the pre-Amtrak BN route of the NORTH COAST).

AMAZING SWITZERLAND BY RAIL AND LAKE STEAMER

Our fifth visit to Switzerland and second trip sponsored by CANNONBALL RAIL EXCURSIONS. The itinerary is a modification of SWISSAIR's RAILROADER trip but is one day longer, operates in peak season, leaving Friday, June 14 & returning Sunday, June 30. Fine weather usual in Switzerland during this period.

Despite inflation, peak season group fare & weekend air supplement, this single private departure is reasonably priced for its value.

Features electric & steam operation, various gauges, funiculars, Rack & Pinion, cable cars, etc. 1st Class hotels & transportation. Private rail cars & private trains. Separate activities planned for spouses & others not avidly addicted to railroading. Optional side-trips for fans. Two experienced escorts.

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CONDUCTORS: George G. Weiss & Jürg H. Frei

Cannonball Rail Excursions

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The train's famous predecessor, the NORTH COAST LIMITED, was one of the oldest and consistently finest named trains in America, having begun operations April 29, 1900 on the 17-year old Northern Pacific transcontinental line, now part of BN. The 1900 train was a summer-only service, but instant success brought it to year-round operation in 1902. In 1909 the train gained new Pullman equipment and the famous NP "Big Baked Potato" appeared in dining cars, this for the opening of the Seattle World's Fair. (Will history repeat itself? This year, as the Spokane World's Fair prepares to open, Senator Mansfield insists that he will get the train running daily to better serve the Northwest.)

Right after World War II, the NP laid out $9.8 million for new engines and rolling stock for the NCL. In 1952 the well-liked two-tone green color scheme was introduced. Two years later the Budd Vista-Dome cars went onto the train, and in 1955 the "Lewis and Clark Traveller's Rest" snack-lounge cars were added.

Under Amtrak, consists vary, as is especially true with non-premier trains that do not carry all "Amtrakized" cars. Here is one example of a consist of train 10, seen at Seattle on July 9, 1973: diesel units Amtrak 101, BN 9763, Amtrak 152 & 100; baggage cars NP 401 & BN 668; coaches Amtrak 4526, GN 1323 (dome), BN 555 (dome); Amtrak 9811 dome "Silver Lounge"; coaches Amtrak 4510, ATSF 2858, Amtrak 4483 & 4539; diner NP 463; Amtrak 9225 dome-lounge-sleeper; sleepers NP 364, UP 1612 "Sun Villa" (11-bdrm), CB&Q "Silver Prairie." Along the Chicago-Minneapolis route, the train normally carries a parlor-lounge-observation on the rear.

RTN's Peter Putnam Bretz reported earlier (Second August issue) on a NCH trip of last summer. Let him now tell of his earliest adventures on the old N.C.LIMITED:

St, Paul, August, 1964, 7:15pm. "Ding-ding-ding-ding," and here came NP #25 rolling slowly into the station. I had heard so much about this train, now was my first chance to ride! I clambored aboard. Located right behind the diner, my car proved to be NP 351, built especially for the NORTH COAST LIMITED, and with the name emblazoned on the letter boards. Sitting down in suplex roomette #10, I heard the announcement come over the P.A. system: "...we are now seating those holding dinner reservations for 7:15pm..." A moment later the porter came by to inquire if I knew about operating the folding bed. I thanked him and reflected that in two minutes, two courtesies happened aboard this two-tone green "premier train" of the NP.

Alan M. Crossley sketched the dome-parlor-lounge observation car "Silver Chateau" as he saw it on train 9 last October running from Chicago to Minneapolis.

Strolling along the train, I noticed about 6 coaches, two with domes. The consist also included a Lewis & Clark Traveller's Rest lounge for coach passengers. It was crowded and well received by passengers. (All 6 Lewis & Clark cars are now with Amtrak.)

ROUTE OF THE VISTA-DOME

NORTH COAST LIMITED

... the train that makes travel fun again!

I sat in the dome the next afternoon as we were going over the Absaroka Range to Logan and would attack the Rockies themselves over Pipestone Pass. Choosing the last dome, I took many slides showing the full length of the train rounding curves. The two-tone green of the consist twisting to and fro was broken up by the silver flash of the slumbercoach just behind the baggage car. Slowly climbing up and over, the train's green blended nicely with the verdant hills. And ever present was the red and black monad insignia of the NP--covering the loudspeaker--reminding us that we were traveling upon the "mainstreet of the Northwest." We crested the continental divide and slid down the mountain to Butte. I got off there and watched the name "NORTH COAST LIMITED" on the observation drumhead recede into the late afternoon.

Even the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR didn't have a certain extra touch: it had been supper in the green train's diner the first day out. I remember the fingerbowls, and I remember the polite steward. But most of all, I remember the Big Baked Potato. I can't recall if I had steak or what, but when the waiter brought the famous potato from Washington State, I was psychologically ready. It was huge, dwarfing all else. It had all the necessaries: chives, sour cream, drawn butter, bacon chips, etc. It even came with a little flag on a toothpick that read "...here's your Big Baked Potato..." Of course it was excellent, and I ate it all, including the peel. In the 9 years since I've ridden the Northern Pacific, I can never go into a restaurant and order a baked potato without thinking back to two shades of green and the "train that makes travel fun again."

Traveller's Rest was the name given by the famed explorers to the favorite camp site in western Montana, near Missoula.

Now the year was 1969 and it was 3pm. I was leaving Portland on a triangle trip over the NP--actually it was the SP&S east to Spokane for the first leg. The SP&S train was known as the EMPIRE BUILDER-NORTH COAST LIMITED CONNECTION. As a result the consist colors looked post-merger BN or unrefurbished Amtrak. But this was pre-merger and each was a separate railroad with its own color schemes. The NP, of course, featured green-and-green livery; the GN olive drab and orange plus Big Sky Blue, while the SP&S added tan and chocolate for flavor. The train presented a Van Gogh nightmare or it was beautiful, depending upon your point of view.

I got a day seat roomette in the lounge-sleeper "Mount Hood," and took a couple of pillows out from the unmade bed to prop up against the window. Returning from the diner later, I found the porter had put fresh cases on the pillows without being asked. Nice. The "Mount Hood," by the way, is currently stored serviceable at Cottage Grove, Oregon on the Oregon Pacific & Eastern.

No need to talk of the grandeur along the Columbia River. All the domes were packed, and the day was crisp and clear. My camera went haywire and no pictures came out; yet I remember the variegated train swinging this way and that aside the north shore of that majestic river. Then, I was off to the diner to sample the wares.

... one of the world's extra fine trains!

The diner "Columbia" was a gem of cleanliness inside and out. Chocolate and tan facing the river, snowy white linen facing the passenger. Fresh-cut flowers, naturally. Service was like a fine hotel, and the food was superb. I recall mentioning to the steward that my dinner didn't come with the delicious-looking soup that others had. His reaction was to present me with a complimentary bowl. After dinner, the mints and lilac water, of course.

Later I told my friends of my triangle adventures over the Northern Pacific. Yes, NP, you were terrific. I was impressed all the way around. But I expected that. You see, my favorite color is green.

(continued from page 5)
about 4am while Amtrak rounded up school buses to bring passengers to Barstow-Daggett Airport where a 557 Air California jet was engaged to bring riders in 3 trips to L.A. Non-fliers waited until the snow-covered highway, also blocked, was cleared, and the school buses moved them on. The empty train was moved to San Bernardino and turned to try to maintain schedules. Passengers that night were bused from L.A. to San Bernardino to catch the train. Observers praised the cooperation between Santa Fe officials and Amtrak men on the scene.

On Jan. 14 the southbound TEXAS CHIEF, carrying 115, derailed near Ardmore, OK, injuring 45, three of them seriously. The train was running at 55mph when all 7 cars left the track, and two of them, including the diner, overturned. The diner caught fire.

On Jan. 14 the southbound FLORIDIAN was blocked by a freight derailment north of Birming ham and backed up to go thru Chattanooga, and was running 20 hours late. The northbound train was being detoured on Southern Railway out of Birmingham.

On Jan. 16 heavy, warm rains in the Northwest and Northern California caused flooding. SP tracks were washed out near Dunsmuir, and the southbound STARLIGHT held at Klamath Falls, the northbound at Redding, while passengers were bused between and trains turned. A makeup DAYLIGHT ran Oakland-L.A. and the northbound train was cancelled at Oakland.

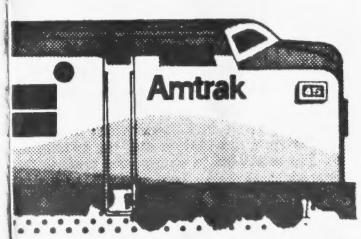
Since the first of the year, the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR has been running habitually a day late, and the Reno-Oakland stub train operating frequently, with around 200 riders using it. As of this date (Jan. 17) the Oakland-Portland portion of the STARLIGHT run remains cancelled. All alternate routes are reportedly blocked by weather conditions.

mixed train of thoughts

REVISED MAILING DATE for this issue of RTN is Jan. 18. The Cost of Living Council has delayed the postal rate increase until March 2..... AN IMPORTANT POINT in all the passenger train mess this winter, described above, is that Amtrak has been working hard to keep people moving, to try to get them to their destinations, using whatever means of transportation, giving them free meals and hotels when necessary. Another important point is that if Amtrak could expend as much effort overcoming the basic faults in its operations--the unsupervised employees and conditions and the railroad operators who don't care or who would like to sabotage Amtrak--, it wouldn't leave this image of the little boy with his finger in the dike..... THE SEVERE STORMS of this season created conditions, of course, in other transportation modes that were equally bad. There's something really dramatic about a passenger train, tho, that brings it into the headlines when something goes wrong. A community on wheels, sharing the same bumps and lurches, the same scenic surprises, the same misfortunes..... CHICAGO DAILY NEWS reports that Amtrak has said it will use French Turboliners on the Chicago-Milwaukee run when it orders more. Said also that Amtrak will benefit in Chicago area from the Railroad Reorganization Act (see p.3), since the rough PC lines east from Chicago will be upgraded..... THE OCTORARO LINE of PC out of Philadelphia has been added to the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's public transportation plan, making it eligible for federal funds and saving it from abandonment. Passenger service is planned to start in the near future..... CHICAGO-TO-DUBUQUE service startup is changed from Jan. 15 to Feb. 14. First Dubuque train will leave Chicago 6:20pm and arrive Dubuque 11:03... THE PENN CENTRAL is now "opening the door" to revival of Boston-Cape Cod service, discontinued over 15 years ago. The energy crisis could bring back vacationers by rail to the region,over the 80-mile track between Boston and Hyannis..... AMTRAK'S NATIONWIDE COMPUTERIZED reservation system is to be operational Feb. 14. Five computer centers are Los Angeles, Chicago, Jacksonville, Bensalem (PA), New York, and Washington..... AMTRAK'S BOAST OF the world's only X-rated train ride, on the COAST DAYLIGHT near Santa Barbara has been shot down by a county ordinance prohibiting nude bathing on nearby beaches..... GREAT BRITAIN WAS hit by a 24-hour railway strike Jan. 15. An earlier, similar strike occurred Jan. 10.....

GREYHOUND CONTINUES CONTROVERSIAL ADS BELITTLING AMTRAK EFFICIENCY

Greyhound's big Wall Street Journal ad (see RTN, 1st Dec. issue) appeared again on January 8. By means of big bar graphs headed by an auto, Amtrak diesel engine, and a Greyhound bus, the corporation seeks to show that buses are over twice as efficient in fuel economy than cars, and 77% better than passenger trains. One expert interviewed by RTN pointed out that the study from which Greyhound got its figures was done between 1950-1970 in the declining ridership years of trains, and is based on only a 37% load factor on trains. Everyone knows loadings are much better than that now. A DOT study shows buses and trains almost identical in fuel economy, and a University of Illinois study shows trains way in the lead. But the biggest distortion of the ad is the slim lead it gives trains over autos.



Turbo Buttons Ready

A SPECIAL, RED, WHITE, BLUE AND BLACK TURBO BUTTON IN LARGE 3-INCH SIZE IS NOW AVAILABLE.

THE STORY BEHIND THESE BUTTONS:
AMTRAK HAS HAD NO ADVERTISING IN THE MADISON, WISCONSIN MARKET, ALTHOUGH THERE IS A SATELLITE STATION IN WISCONSIN'S CAPITOL CITY. PASSENGERS ARE BUSED TO COLUMBUS, WISCONSIN TO MEET THE "EMPIRE BUILDER" AND THE "NORTH COAST HIAWATHA."

THE KREUNEN FAMILY SET ABOUT TO REMEDY THIS SITUATION. JULIE WROTE TO AMTRAK AND ASKED FOR ADS IN THE NEWSPAPER. SHE WAS TOLD THAT AMTRAK'S BUDGET DIDN'T ALLOW IT, SO SHE DREW UP A SKETCH OF A BUTTON IN HER 6th GRADE ART CLASS. HER FATHER, A LONG-TIME RAIL ENTHUSIAST, HELPED HER HAVE THE BUTTONS MADE UP, AT GREAT PERSONAL EXPENSE, TO HELP TELL PEOPLE ABOUT THE NEW CORRIDOR TURBINE TRAINS.

YOU CAN NOW PURCHASE THESE BUTTONS DIRECTLY FROM THE KREUNENS AND HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT AMTRAK'S NEW TRAINS. POSTPAID SAMPLE $1, OR 4 FOR $3, OR 7 FOR $5, FROM:
JULIE ANN KREUNEN, 305 YOSEMITE TRAIL, PARKWOOD HILLS, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53705

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